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LETTER DATED 18 SEPTEMBER 1996 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL

On instructions from my Government, I have the honour to inform you of the following:

1. On 20 August 1996 at 0900 hours, as the Iraqi tugboat 7 Nisan, which was towing the Iraqi dredger Al-Mosul from Khawr al-Zubayr to the port of Faw, reached Khawr al-Amaya near Mina' al-Amiq, an American helicopter ordered the tugboat to stop, after which a rubber dinghy, launched by the American frigate Cromilin, which has been in the region, arrived carrying seven soldiers and a person speaking the Kuwaiti dialect; these individuals boarded the boat, which they inspected for an hour before returning in the direction of the American frigate.

2. On 13 September 1996 at 0700 hours, an American helicopter forced the Iraqi civilian push boat Al-Fida, which was preparing to enter the Shatt al-Arab, to sail towards a point situated between Mina' al-Bakr and Mina' al-Amiq so that it could be inspected. The same day, at 1105 hours, after the American forces had completed their inspection, the push boat was free to resume its journey.

I request that you intervene in order to make the Government of the United States of America halt these repeated unjustified acts, which constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of international law, as well as a provocation against the Republic of Iraq. The aim of such acts is to create a climate of tension in the region. I take this opportunity to reaffirm the legally established right of the Republic of Iraq to seek compensation for the damage caused by such hostile acts to its property, in accordance with the principle of international responsibility.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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